The

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

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Notes of the Month.

During the present month several important annual meetings in connection with our North of Ireland congregations will be held. First in point of time is the Sunday School Conference at Dunmurry. The latter is so easy of access that a large attendance should be assured. The three papers which are to be read should be both helpful in themselves and also lead to a good discussion. There was, perhaps, never a time when Sunday School matters were of greater interest than at present, and new methods are amongst the most urgent of needs in many quarters. We trust that as a result of this Conference our teachers will be abundantly encouraged and stimulated in their work.

As is the custom, the annual meetings of three organisations—the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Association, and the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland—will fall about the middle of the month, viz., on the 17th and 18th. It is a matter for regret that these are never so well attended as they should be, seeing that they afford opportunities for members of many congregations to meet and deliberate about their common work. Perhaps the explanation of the sparse attendances in the past was the fact that business discussions are not the most attractive things for a June day. Consequently this year a Sub-Committee, which was appointed to consider how the meetings might be made more attractive, has made certain recommendations which are to receive a trial this month. On Tuesday, June 17th, from 3-30 to 6-30, a garden party will be held at The Farm, Antrim Road. It is earnestly hoped that the kindness of the Misses Bruce in throwing open their grounds and gardens will meet with a very general response. It will then be possible for us to meet in friendly, social intercourse, to the accompaniment of a good band, and with other harmonious helps and aids. The result should be satisfactory, and stimulating to us all. Another innovation in the proceedings of June 18th will be a Conference at 3-30 in the Central Hall, which will be opened by a paper by the Rev. Alex. Gordon, on "One of our Debts to the Fourth Gospel." The name of Mr. Gordon is

a guarantee that the paper will be valuable, and a good attendance should be the result of this new arrangement, especially when it is borne in mind that the Sub-Committee are desirous of attracting our laity as well as the ministers.

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We were very pleased to learn that some of our earnest laymen were quick to recognise the value of the Commemoration Number of the "Christian Life" for propaganda purposes. One gentleman not only saw to it that every member of his own congregation received a copy, but also provided the orthodox ministers of his district with one. Nothing could better serve to convince the ignorant that Unitarianism has stood, and still stands, for something more significant than religious eccentricity. It is a faith which finds its explanation in the historic past, its justification in the religious needs of the present, its constant encouragement in the many lives it has fostered and fashioned for the duties of this life and the opportunities of the life which is to be. Nothing gives us greater pleasure, therefore, than to learn that some of our people are fully alive to the importance of making our faith known to others not yet associated with us in the doing of God's work in the world.

* *

The May meetings of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association were of special interest for people in the North of Ireland. The preacher was the Rev. J. H. Weatherall, M.A., of Bolton, the son of our respected minister at Moira. The Essex Hall lecture was delivered by one well known amongst us—the Rev. Alex. Gordon, M.A. His subject, "Heresy, its Ancient Wrongs and Modern Rights, in these Kingdoms," was both appealing and opportune. When the lecture is issued in book form, it is sure to find many readers in this country, for it will reflect that intimate knowledge of our spiritual pedigree which we ever associate with the lecturer's work. It made a great impression upon its hearers, and we anticipate much pleasure and profit from its perusal.

The members of the orthodox Presbyterian Church are taking steps to celebrate the Tercentenary of Presbyterianism in Ireland. In that pious duty we have also our part to play, since we have not only a common ancestry, but can trace, as we believe, a more direct descent. Hence our ministers should make it their aim to bring home to the minds of their members the nature of their forbears and the value of their inheritance. Freely we have received, let us also freely give—of our earnest thought, and no less of our loyal gratitude.

THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL.

By Rev. A. Turner.

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.—Matt. v. 48.

AMONGST the marvellous paradoxes of the Sermon on the Mount, statements and directions which have always appeared to many as contrary to received opinion, few are so wonderful as this, which commands you to be perfect in the same degree of perfection as your Heavenly Father. So high indeed is the ideal that it seems almost incredible that mortals weighted by sin and temptation, related, perhaps, to an ancestry of doubtful morality, and circumscribed by surroundings which do not lend themselves to the production of the best life, should be asked to live up to it, or expected even to approximate to such an incomparable standard. But the incredibility rests only with those who have failed to realise the real method and purpose of the Gospel. The meaning here of the word perfect may indicate not so much the finished thing as the thing growing and developing, and taking this view of the meaning you are told in the second part of the verse to grow and develop as God. The same word perfect is applied to God and man, and it would seem to mean that as God is perfect as God, so man should be perfect as man—each perfect in his kind.

Where such a growth or development exists, there you find established a God-likeness. There is something like to God in the man who aims at the realization of a good and strong and pure life ; in his desire and struggle to reach perfection in his own sphere he has already become God-like. And so it is no presumption on the part of man to try to achieve God-likeness, or to say that he may become equal in his own perfection to the Almighty. But, lest haply someone should see presumption in the statement, I hasten to point out that we have the highest authority for it, namely, that of our Lord Jesus Christ ; and whether the ideal be realized or not, it is evidently realizable, for he commands it and expects it, and says : Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. But, besides this highest of all authority, you can see the latent possibility and divinity of man in his capacities, which range the whole universe. No doubt he is limitable, but the limits are far-extending. The Psalmist in the olden time saw this, for he wrote, " What is man, that thou art mindful of him ? and the son of man, that thou visitest him ? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands ; thou hast put all things under his feet." We know more now in many respects than the Psalmist knew, but our increased knowledge only goes to prove the correctness of the Psalmist's statement. There is very little of this earth man cannot explore, and he can read it like a book. He can measure it and weigh it, and is conversant with all its movements. He knows its relativity to other bodies in space, and knows something of those other bodies. And as he knows the macrocosm, so he knows the microcosm, and finds in the composition of a drop of water the same wonders of law and manifestation of intelligence as that which designed and created the Milky Way, and which keeps suns and stars in their courses. He is always striving to perfect his knowledge. It may perhaps be, strictly speaking, incorrect to say that he creates. At any rate he arranges and re-arranges ; he, as we say, invents ; he gives expression to thought, and if giving expression to thought is to create, then he in some measure creates. In this department of activity he never ceases. And if you think of man in his real and infinite longing after the highest, satisfied by no achievement, but moving in ever higher circles to the great King of Glory, you will agree that he is moving, if sometimes in devious ways, still moving in the direction of that perfection which is as the perfection of God. It is no presumption of man to try to achieve God-likeness, for men were made in the image of God, and to His image they will return.

That human aspiration in every department of thought and activity presses forward and upward towards new realizations there can be no doubt. And it is well for the race that this should be so. In the absence of ceaseless endeavour to perfect the otherwise imperfect indifference ensues, stagnation and degeneration ; and the best life dies out. There is always hope so long as people try and give of their best effort ; and many people there are who do so try. But I would draw your attention to the important fact that, even as there are forces at work which impel to higher achievement, which make in the direction of perfection, so also there are forces at work which produce a contrary result. As it is possible to rise up into more life and fuller, so it is possible to sink to the depths of degradation and become utterly bankrupt in the great and sacred gift of life. The command is : Be ye therefore perfect, and it implies the existence of a corresponding degree of imperfection. There could be no use in striving to be perfect if the effort did not mean that at the same time we were striving to leave behind us an undesirable imperfection. But there is no necessity for me to occupy your time in the endeavour to prove to you that the forces which pull in a downward direction do really and potently exist : in fact they cannot fail to have been established in your own observation. Few people are un-

acquainted with the ravages wrought by intemperance. The downward pull is evident in the personal, physical, social, moral, and religious life of the sufferer. Self-reliance becomes undermined, self-respect receives a severe check, capacity for work and usefulness is lessened, and life is used up at a quicker pace than need be. In this case we have an ever-present negative force, and where it operates it is impossible to carry out the commands of our text. If this particular downward pull were the only one we have to contend with, it would be well for us, for in that case the world's woes would be considerably diminished. But the word intemperance is a big word, and comprises quite a multitude of sins. When thinking of intemperance we must think of eating as well as drinking, of greed, of inordinate love of luxury and pleasure, of dress, and particularly ought we to bear in mind the fact that there is such a thing as intemperate thought, *i.e.*, unclean thought and impurity of life. Indeed, when we come to reckon up the sum total of the drawbacks, we are amazed and wonder what can be the chances of success. Truly, it is an incomparable ideal which he holds out to poor mortals living in the dangers of all-powerful sin, that we are to grow in the image of God. Perhaps some will say that the ideal is too high—to which it can but be replied that it is only by following illimitable ideals that we can ever hope to succeed.

But if we profess and call ourselves Christians, we are pledged to reach out to that ideal. Jesus does not ask us to do it without showing us how it is to be done. We have his word, and he always, without exception, stands at the back of his word. Here we have the upward pull. And as he inspires to better life in the individual by means largely of his love and sympathy, so he inspires or saves in the case of mankind generally. Individually and collectively we need to come to him, *i.e.*, if we care at all about better things.

And coming, what do we find? Take, for instance, his teaching relative to the kingdom of God, for therein, I believe, is to be seen the Christian ideal and everything pertaining thereto. The thought of the kingdom of God did not originate with him, but was in vogue before his advent upon earth, and was regarded as a kingdom in conflict with the kingdom of the devil—a conflict which would be decided sometime in the future in favour of the kingdom of God. Jesus took up this thought, and enriched and made it new. He added something to it, and the thing he added is the thing that matters—the thing that has become a mighty power in the hearts of men, viz., this—"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," "the kingdom of God is within you." Any of the parables will explain its meaning. "The kingdom of God comes by coming to the individual, by entering into his soul and laying hold of it. True, the kingdom of God is the rule of God; but it is the rule of the Holy God in the hearts of individuals; it is God himself in his power." Any parable you take will set forth this explanation; the parable of the sower, of the pearl of great price, of the treasure buried in the field,—viz., the Word of God, God himself is the kingdom. It is just a question of God and the soul, the soul and its God. Citizenship in that kingdom means that the citizen has it in him to approximate to the high standard of the Christian ideal.

But, let us take another example of his teaching which brings us, I imagine, to pretty much the same conclusion; I refer to his conception of the value of the human soul. In the Lord's Prayer and throughout the Gospel message the thought of God as Father is never absent, and when you get this thought in conjunction with the other thought, that a human soul can be so ennobled as to blend and become one with the spirit of the living God, then you get again the entire Gospel message with the Christian ideal involved, and the possibility of approximation thereto realized. Remember, if Jesus calls on a human soul to be perfect in such a high degree of perfection, he only does so because, to begin with, he places upon that soul the highest possible value. "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his won

soul ? " he asks, and by the question he indicates the infinite value of the human soul. Is it any wonder he says to that soul, Be perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect ? or, that he should expect it to attain to such perfection ?

The two examples I have given reveal and set forth the infinite love of God for man, and the possible love of man for God. And in the word love the Gospel message is again summed up, and the Christian ideal again contained. But it is a love that *serves*, that *gives*, and does not merely talk. Jesus said the word, and he stood at the back of it to the last moment of his life on earth.

And so if you seek betterment, either in the individual life or in the life of the community, there you have the secret, the Spirit of Christ, the sympathy of Christ, the love of God. For instance, if you consider the state of industrial life to-day, the relations of class to class, of labour to capital, try to realize that as professing Christians you are a people pledged to the principle of love and good-will. It is still the standard of measurement. Selfishness and class—hatred can serve no good purpose. Neither is it of any use to blame the country or the government. It makes no difference what the situation, what the government, or what the laws of the country are, for you see the same social and industrial unrest to-day under despotic governments, under limited monarchies, and under varied heads of laws. The cure for all this social unrest is the recognition of the Christian ideal—the panacea of all the world's woes is the spirit of Jesus. Acts of Parliament can only touch the fringe of such problems, and if a day of betterment is ever to come, and if in our life generally we are to become more truly Christian, it can only be by the levelling of society by the true and sympathetic spirit of Jesus—love and thoughtfulness for others. The greatest hindrance to the growth of all-round better life to-day is the lives of those who profess Christianity, but who never attempt to live up to its splendid ideal. Jesus does not tell you that you should just be more respectable men and women, living up to whatever is the standard of the society in which you live, but he tells you that you should be perfect even as your heavenly Father is perfect.

This is an old doctrine, but please do not think it out of date, for, if old, it is also always new. It is as much needed to-day as ever it was, and it will be needed at the last day. We cannot well manage without religion, without faith and trust in the living God. Amidst all the changes and vicissitudes of life, the eternal mysteries of God remain, and we need God, and we need the Gospel of Christ to lead us in the way everlasting.

PIONEERS OF LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY.

By Rev. G. L. Phelps.

V. James Martineau (1805–1900).

IN Dr. Martineau there mingled the blood of the French Huguenots and the English Puritans. He seems always to have been of a thoughtful disposition, and, surrounded as he was by religious influences of a thoroughly healthy kind, it is not surprising that he devoted himself to the cause of Liberal Christianity. His first choice of a profession was, however, that of engineering, but he was disappointed to find that the master to whom he was apprenticed could not explain to him the scientific principles of his work ; he was more interested in the theory of engineering than the practice. In the meantime seeds sown while at Dr. Lant Carpenter's school, at Bristol, were beginning to spring up, and an experience of profound and sacred sorrow at the loss of a young friend wrought a change in him which led him to enter the ministry. His own account of this change gives us a glimpse of the spirit of the man. " Here it was that the religious part of my life first commenced ; in fact the light was so overpowering and so strong that it bore me from the workshop of my occupation and turned me from an engineer into an evangelist.

I well remember, under the fervour of the first enthusiasm, how the voices which sounded in our various places of worship appeared to me to be beneath the exigencies of the case—too sober and too cold; and beneath the broken light of an immature judgment I thought there ought to be some stronger and more spiritual ministry that should less depend upon our self-help, but should take us off our feet and fling us into a diviner life than that which prevailed among us."

Martineau entered Manchester as a divinity student in his 18th year. From that time onward he devoted himself to religion and philosophy to such good purpose, that in an age remarkable for its intellectual giants he took rank among the mightiest. As a preacher he never attracted large congregations; as a professor he would playfully apply to himself Plato's description of Socrates as teaching two or three boys in a corner. But the sermons preached to such scanty congregations, and afterwards published in *Endeavours after the Christian Life*, and *Hours of Thought on Sacred Things*, have become classics of devotional literature; and as for the philosophy expounded to two or three boys in a corner, Dr. Stopford Brooke did not go beyond the truth when he said: "The victory which the ideas of God and the Soul and Immortality are now beginning to secure over their enemies is largely due to Martineau's stern and quiet leadership, under the banners of the intellect and the conscience, of the soldiers of religion. He taught, strictly within the realms of philosophy and criticism, that all science begins and ends in God; and that, without the postulate of the soul in man akin to God and going to him, science and ethics have no secure foundation. No other man has done this needful work so firmly or so clearly as he has done. Even the Church of England, with its cry, Can any good come out of the Unitarian village? has been goaded into dim confessions of his use. On the whole, I have no doubt that the battle is practically won against the forces of godless science and godless ethics, and that Martineau has been the best builder, among many others, of a religion, bound up with Jesus Christ, rooted in the confession of the Fatherhood of God, which is agreeable to reason and in full accordance with the ethical progress of man in history.

Martineau began his ministry in the Eustace Street Presbyterian Church, Dublin, as assistant and successor to the Rev. Philip Taylor, but on the death of Mr. Taylor he could not bring himself to accept the Regium Donum, and did not remain. From Dublin he went to Liverpool, but he found his true vocation as professor, and afterwards principal, of Manchester New College. The greater part of his energies was devoted to the study and teaching of philosophy, but it was not until after his eightieth birthday that he published, in three great works, the results of his long life of intellectual labour. In the first of these, "Types of Ethical Theory," he gives the most powerful and competent reply to the advocates of utilitarian and determinist theories of morals. In the second, "A Study of Religion," is the finest vindication of theistic belief published since the general acceptance of the theory of evolution. In the third, "The Seat of Authority in Religion," he made a most searching criticism of the claims of the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches, and puts forward with force and eloquence his plea for the authority of the intuitions of conscience.

Martineau recognised three modes of the self-revelation of the divine in the human, and that the ideal man is he in whom all these three are combined and harmoniously developed. First, God is revealed in man's rational nature: in the reason which enables the mind to rise above itself, to discern laws and general principles, and thus to progressively attain to a more complete and self-consistent conception of the universe. The chief defect of this mode is that it empties the universe of its rich, personal element. Second, God is revealed in man's moral nature, in conscience with its categorical imperative; man becomes aware of a divine authority which asserts a right

to control his personal desires and aims, This leads to the conception of God as an external lawgiver. Third, God is revealed in man's spiritual nature. in the consciousness of His immediate presence in the moral ideal, in the ideal of beauty, in the promptings of Divine love. This mode of revelation leads to mysticism, the defect of which is that it tends to merge the human in the divine. The three modes together afford the highest and surest revelation man can have of God.

At a time when the scientists were extending human knowledge in all directions, and the old theologies were trembling on their insecure foundations, Martineau left obsolete arguments from the Scriptures, resolved to come on to the very ground of the scientists themselves and demonstrate from the evidences of law and evolution, which so startled the old-fashioned theologians, that all thinking about the origin and end of things must inevitably lead to belief in God—nay, more, belief in an ever-living God, in a Divine mind and will ruling the universe and holding moral relations with mankind. Martineau established on the firm foundations of reason and experience belief in a personal God who holds communion with men. He further taught men to find that communion not exclusively in the Bible, or in the Church, but first and foremost in the heart of the individual. To use a phrase of his own, he substituted the religion of consciousness for the religion of custom ; he revealed once more the God of the living to people whose spiritual guides knew only the God of the dead.

We are reluctantly compelled to hold over until next month a further list of donations to the Sustentation Fund.

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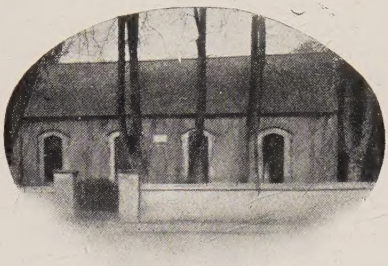
Holywood.—At a special meeting of the congregation, held on March 2nd, the proposal to adopt "The New Hymnal" was considered. After some discussion it was unanimously decided not to make any change. (This report was not sent in time for publicatoin earlier.)



THE OLD MEETING-HOUSE, ANTRIM.

ANTRIM.

INSTALLATION OF REV. G. V. CROOK.

THE installation of Rev. G. V. Crook as minister to the congregation worshipping in the Old Meeting-house, Antrim, and as successor to the late Rev. W. S. Smith, took place on Monday, the 19th May, at 12 o'clock. There was a large and enthusiastic congregation, quite filling the sacred edifice, and including many members of the Presbytery of Antrim, members of other Presbyteries, and representatives of the clerical, medical, and legal professions in Antrim and district. Rev. R. M. King officiated at the harmonium, and was ably supported by an efficient and augmented choir.

The Rev. E. H. Pickering, B.A., of All Souls' Church, Belfast, led the devotional exercises and preached an interesting sermon from I. Cor. ii. 16—"We have the mind of Christ." "The mind of Christ," he said, "is simplicity. Life for most men and women is a medley of interests, a conscious or unconscious agony of flesh and spirit, life and eternity. We are compounded of dust and deity, and, in consequence, at one time we wallow in the dust, and at another time make a struggle towards the divine." Into a world such as this came Jesus Christ, and brought a spirit which cleared and unified. Life cannot be easy for creatures of earth whose destiny is heaven. But the sweet simplicity of the mind of Christ will temper that hardness with a never-failing joy.

The Rev. R. M. King, of Newtownards, gave an able exposition on the subject of the Presbyterian Order of Church Government. We much regret that considerations of space render it impossible to print the address here, but trust that on a future occasion we may have an opportunity of presenting it to the notice of our readers.

At the conclusion of the address, Mr. King proceeded to ask the usual questions of the candidate, to which Rev. G. V. Crook replied in the affirmative, and promised faithfully to perform the duties of Presbytery. Mr. Hunter, on behalf of the congregation, adhered to the call given to Mr. Crook. Mr. Crook then, in response to Mr. King, made a statement of his belief and aims. The Christian ministry, he said, had claimed his deepest thought from infancy ; his desire was to spend and be spent in the Master's service. He had tried to preach the Gospel as well as he could, and had preached to many sections of the Christian Church. He spoke respectfully of all standards, but still believed that thought moved. He blessed God for the widening thought of the day. He would try to lead them to live the life, to carry out, as they had heard that day, the mind of Christ.

Rev. A. O. Ashworth led in prayer, at the conclusion of which Mr. Ashworth invited all ministers present, of all churches, and all members of the church, and friends, to come forward with the right hand of fellowship. This invitation was largely and enthusiastically responded to.

The Rev. T. Munn, of Greyabbey, gave the charge to minister and congregation. This address, in every way admirable, was entirely to the point, and dealt exclusively with its subject. The vein of wit and humour which threaded its way through the discourse was evidently much appreciated, and will, no doubt, help to keep its teaching fresh in the minds of his hearers. We regret that we cannot at this present time reproduce the address, but hope to do so on a future occasion.

The Rev. G. V. Crook gave out the final hymn and pronounced the benediction.

AFTER SERVICE.

Luncheon was served in the Massereene Arms Hotel, when about seventy ladies and gentlemen partook thereof, under the presidency of Rev. H. J. Rossington, who said grace before meat. The luncheon was everything that could be desired, simple, perhaps, but good, and the spirit of the meeting was excellent.

The Chairman gave the toast of " The King," which was loyally honoured. Then followed that of " The Lord Lieutenant and the Countess of Aberdeen," which also was appropriately received. The Chairman then gave " The trade and prosperity of the town of Antrim," coupled with the names of Mr. R. J. Kirk, J.P., and Dr. Gawn. Mr. Kirk said Antrim was going forward. He saw a great improvement during the last ten or fifteen years. Much better houses were being built, and that showed prosperity ; and with regard to the question of employment, it was almost impossible to find a labouring man at any price. Dr. Gawn did not know much about the trade, but he had ample evidence of the town's prosperity. There is no better evidence, he said, than the census returns. According to the last census, Antrim had increased by twenty-seven per cent., and that could not be said of any other town in Ireland. During the past 21 years things had improved wonderfully in every way. The health of the community had improved. In closing his remarks, the Doctor made a fine reference to the memory of the late Rev. W. S. Smith.

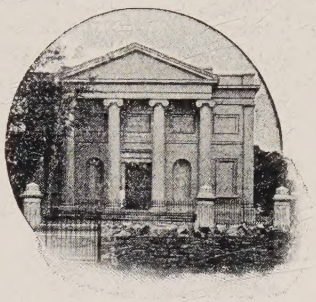
The Chairman then proposed " The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland," drawing attention to the fact of its recent re-organization. Rev. A. Turner replied.

The toast of " The new minister and the success of the Antrim congregation " followed, and Mr. J. Hunter, J.P., replying, said how delighted he was to see so many friends present, and especially of the different denominations. He thought they were fortunate in securing the services of Mr. Crook, and quite believed that they would succeed under his ministry. Mr. R.

Gray, jun., also replied, and hoped they would flourish under Mr. Crook. Rev. G. V. Crook spoke highly of the welcome he had received. He wished success to the movement in the matter of technical education in Antrim, and although it had swallowed up their Manse, he hoped they would soon be able to find another house that would meet their needs. He would strive to grow in their midst to the same respect enjoyed by his predecessor, the late Rev. W. S. Smith.

The Chairman then gave the toast of the other religious denominations, and the spirit of brotherhood, coupled with the names of the Rev. Dr. West and the Rev. Mr. Adams. Dr. West indulged in a fine piece of reminiscence, and said it was his privilege to be present forty years ago at the installation of the Rev. W. S. Smith. He remembered quite well that on that occasion there was no tea on the table as on the present occasion ; but there was porter on the table, or, to put it another way, there was Scott Porter at the head of the table and Classon Porter at the foot. The reverend Doctor greatly appreciated the service of the day, mentioning especially the address on the Order of Church Government and the charge to minister and people. He wished Mr. Crook all prosperity, and gave him the heartiest of welcomes. He hoped the congregation would enjoy great blessing on the connection which had just been formed. The Rev. Mr. Adams wished well to the minister and congregation of Antrim. He spoke feelingly of the memory of the late minister, and was glad to have had the privilege of sharing his good friendship. He wished peace and prosperity to all within the old walls of the meeting-house. The Rev. Dr. Irwin (Killead) was pleased to be there, and thanked the committee for their kindness in asking him, and hoped to work always in harmony with their new minister, and wished all success in the days to come.

Mr. Wm. Hunter moved that the best thanks of the meeting be given to Mr. Rossington for presiding, and Mr. Rossington replied, thanking them very much for their kindness in placing him in that position, and stating that he regarded the meeting as marked by harmony, and in every way a success.



THE NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BANBRIDGE.

BANBRIDGE.

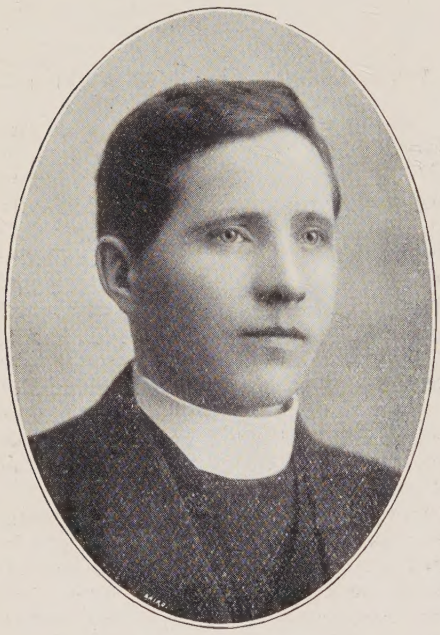
INSTALLATION OF REV. GLYNNE DAVIES.

On Thursday, May 8th, the Rev. James Glynne Davies, of Aberdare, South Wales, was installed to the pastorate of the above Church, in succession to the Rev. Edgar Lockett. Despite the very inclement weather which prevailed, there were several ministerial friends present, in addition to the members of the congregation, including the ministers of other Churches in town.

The religious service was conducted by the Rev. George J. Slipper, Moderator of the Armagh Presbytery, who preached from Hebrews xii. 1.

The Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., in expounding the order of Presbyterian Church Government, took us back to the simplicity of first principles, and explained in a very clear and interesting way how the early Christians in the time of St. Paul felt the necessity of some system by which all the Churches which were growing up about them could be kept in real and living touch with one another ; and so they went back to the old Jewish ideal of having an elder to represent them at any united meetings where they could sit and deliberate upon all subjects of vital interest to the Churches.

They usually chose their minister as their representative, or preaching elder. Co-operation and organization were necessary for all the congregations, and so, several of them who were united by the same spirit, and had the same ends in view, and who were geographically near to each other, formed a society, or, as we now term it, a Presbytery, wherein they conferred together as congregations confer together, and so learned to profit in mutual experience. So it was also with larger groups. They joined together and formed an united group, such as the General Assembly



REV. J. G. DAVIES.

to-day represents. The feeling had always been that there must be unity, and thus all small Presbyteries were united, just as our Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, that the spirit of co-operation might be promoted. Presbyterianism teaches unity of spirit and Church organization as well as co-operation. The minister and people must unite together in the welfare of the Church, then with the Presbytery to which the Church was attached, and so also with the larger or general body of the Church.

The prescribed questions were then put to Mr. Davies, who, in responding to the request that he should give a statement of his ideals and principles, said that it was his desire and endeavour to work, as he had already done during the three years he had spent in the ministry. He would strive to give expression to Christ's spirit in all his work, and would count any little differences of opinion as minor things. The Christian religion was the supreme means of bringing fellowship of spirit in our modern life. His people's interests, joys, and sorrows he would make his also, and endeavour to share their burdens, and make his ministry beneficial both to them and to himself also.

The question put to the congregation was responded to by Mr. S. Bell, the secretary, and the Rev. M. S. Dunbar, M.A., offered the installation prayer. The right hand of fellowship to the newly installed minister was then given by the visiting ministers and members of the congregation.

The Moderator of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland then delivered a most impressive charge to the minister, in which he spoke as one brother to another of responsibilities that were common to both, as well as emphasizing the fact that to awaken religion in others one must be truly religious oneself. One must cherish the virtues of sympathy, self-sacrifice, and self-abnegation if one would truly follow Christ's example. The ministry must be regarded in a high and conscientious spirit, and the Christ spirit must be shown in proper outward expression. Culture derived from careful study was very essential, and one must use every means of keeping abreast of the current of thought. The work of the ministry required patience, earnestness, zeal, perseverance, and faithfulness, but the rewards were great, and in after years the results would be shown, and the blessing of God would rest upon all.

The Rev. Alfred Davison, of Dromore, gave the charge to the congregation, in which he advocated an active co-operation between the people and their minister. He pleaded for regular at-

tendance at the church services, and the cultivation of the proper spiritual atmosphere, and especially that the people should make their minister feel he had their sympathy. He warned them against attaching too much importance to social calls. The service was concluded with hymn and prayer, offered by the newly installed minister.

LUNCHEON.

The visiting ministers and friends were afterwards entertained to luncheon in the Dunbar Memorial Schools. The Rev. Thos. Dunkerley, B.A., presided, and there were also present—Revs. J. Glynne Davies, H. J. Rossington, M.A. ; M. S. Dunbar, M.A. ; Alex. O. Ashworth, A. Davison, G. V. Crook, J. H. Bibby, M. Watkins, S. E. Bowen, G. J. Slipper ; also, Revs. Thos. Boyd, B.A., and R. Buick Knox, B.A. ; Messrs. J. Murphy, J.P., (Chairman Urban Council), John Smyth, M.A. ; R. W. Glass, LL.B. ; S. Bell, A. M'Cammon, A. W. Emerson, B. M'Caw, S. Sterling. W. Hutton, J. M'Keown, and several ladies.

The usual toasts of " The King " and " The Lord Lieutenant" and " Prosperity to Ireland " were honoured ; also " The health of the newly installed minister," ably proposed by Mr. R. W. Glass. Other sentiments were " The town and trade of Banbridge," to which Mr. J. Murphy responded in an interesting address. " The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland," responded to by the Rev. G. V. Crook ; and "Other Denominations," responded to by the Revs. T. Boyd and R. B. Knox. The interesting proceedings were concluded with a vote of thanks to the congregation for their hospitality.

SOIREE.

In the evening a very successful soiree was held to welcome Mr. Davies. After tea had been dispensed by the ladies of the congregation, the Rev. J. A. Kelly took the Chair and introduced an interesting programme, including songs by the choir, Mrs. M'Cammon, Revs. S. E. Bowen and M. Watkins, and Master J. and Miss S. M'Keown. Mrs. M'Cammon and Miss Dornan acted as accompanists. Addresses were also given by Mr. Glass, who voiced the welcome of the congregation in felicitous terms, and Mr. Davies responded. Rev. W. B. Knox expressed his pleasure at being present, and joined heartily in the welcome. Other speakers included Revs. H. J. Rossington, M. Watkins, and G. J. Slipper, who welcomed Mr. Davies on behalf of the Presbytery of Armagh. The meeting, which throughout was very enthusiastic, was concluded by all singing the National Anthem. Altogether the proceedings of the day were very hearty, and a very happy spirit was manifest, auguring well for a long and useful ministry.

CLOUGH.

INSTALLATION OF REV. J. D. DAVIES.

The installation of Rev. J. D. Davies, late of York Street Church, was held on Thursday, May 15th. The sunny, dry weather, and the fresh beauty of the country made matters very pleasant for the city friends who arrived in brakes and motors.

The services commenced at 12-30 (noon), when the Rev. E. H. Pickering preached an eloquent sermon on the text I. John iii. 2 : " Now are we the children of God." in the course of which he pointed out the importance of training the young to observe all that is noble and beautiful in the world around them ; to grasp its underlying meaning, so that a love for the sublime might be firmly established in them. He emphasised the duty of men, to exercise their spiritual powers, to rise to the beauty of holiness, and to become, in truth and in spirit, children of God.

Rev. A. O. Ashworth explained the Presbyterian Church Order, delineating the salient differences between this Order and that of Congregationalism and Episcopalianism, and in which way it excelled in its principles to guide and protect the interests of congregations and ministers.

After the questions and replies, Rev. J. D. Davies made his statement, declaring his principles and objects in the ministry. God, he said, was the Father of mankind, who was alone to be worshipped, who was a God of power, and

that power was love. No sin or error was deep enough to deprive a child of the Father's love. A sinner made his own hell. God waited patiently, with unspeakable tenderness, for the return of the prodigal. The world's evolution was impelled by the Infinite Power which had guided the faltering steps of man upward, from very low beginnings. The history of man's moral and religious growth proved the fact of man's ascent, whose struggles succeeded in overcoming difficulties and individual and social evils, to attain the more abundant life. Jesus, our Lord, awakened the despondent world to a new life and a new hope ; who made religion a life ; who gave men a faith that demanded not only humility and a forgiving spirit, but also a strong will, a firm conviction and a character. As a prophet, Jesus announced that God, who was the Father of the human race, was near at hand ; that eternal life awaited all who obeyed His commandments ; and that universal peace and goodwill among men would be the ultimate condition on earth. The meek and gentle Jesus became the light of the world, whose light still shines to energise, to guide, and to save, and whose interest in and love for humanity sprung from a soul that had a boundless trust in God, which death even could not subdue.

Rev. M. S. Dunbar offered, very impressively, the installation prayer. The charge to installed minister and congregation was given by Rev. H. J. Rossington, who addressed both parties on their respective duties and privileges as a Church of God.

The closing hymn was read, and the benediction was pronounced by Rev. J. D. Davies. After the service, friends and many members of the congregation were conveyed to Downpatrick to dine in the Down Hunt.

The chair was occupied by George Allen, Esq., J.P., of Mountpanther, one of the main pillars of Clough. The Chairman, after a few introductory remarks, proposed the toasts of " The King " and " The Lord Lieutenant and Prosperity to Ireland." To the latter Rev. J. H. Bibby replied. " The newly-appointed minister " was the next toast, proposed by Rev. H. J. Rossington. Rev. J. D. Davies replied. Rev. A. O. Ashworth proposed " The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, emphasising the Presbytery of Antrim." Rev. R. M. King responded. Rev. M. S. Dunbar proposed "The Clough Congregation." One of the Committee, Mr. Haye, replied. The toast of " The Visitors " was proposed by Mr. Hugh Donnan, to which Rev. R. Scott replied. Mr. S. C. N. Lowry proposed " The Chairman," to which the Chairman, who was warmly greeted, replied, thanking them, and referred to his connection with the church, and to the pleasure it afforded him to be with them that day on such an important occasion.

The service was well attended and impressive. The dinner proved successful in every way, and the sentiments expressed by all the speakers revealed a firm confidence that the issue would be happy and satisfactory in every way.

The presence of the secretary, Mr. D. G. M'Cammon, J.P., was sadly missed on this special occasion. All present sympathised with him in his trouble. All the ministers present belonged to the Antrim Presbytery with the exception of the neighbouring ministers—Rev. J. H. Bibby, of Ballee ; Rev. R. Scott, of Clough ; and Rev. A. Amey, of Rademon.

LESSON NOTES FOR TEACHERS.

By Rev. E. H. Pickering, B.A.

Scenes, Incidents, and Lessons from the Life of Jesus.

XIII. The Extension of Jesus' Ministry. Read Mark iii. 7-19. *Memory verse,* Mark iii. 14.

A. *Jesus' growing popularity.* (1) Crowds came from all Palestine, and from S (Idumaea), E (beyond Jordan), N (Tyre and Sidon). His wonderful teaching and healing attracted them. (2) The unclean spirits are the first to hail him as son of God. They recognised their conqueror. For the belief in unclean spirits read Carpenter's " Life in Palestine," pp. 59*ff.* (3) Jesus would not let

the demoniacs make public his power. Like all good men, he did not want his goodness known. There is a story that, after a certain battle, a certain officer found a loaf of bread. He was starving, as were all the troop. But he saw through a window two other officers terribly wounded. He threw the bread to them and rode off before they could recognise him.

B. *The choosing of the Twelve.* (1) Jesus wanted sympathetic helpers by him, and missionaries to spread his gospel of life. So also did William Lloyd Garrison have some twelve helpers in his anti-slavery crusade. Like the first apostles, they soon multiplied, and brought about the abolition of slavery, thus carrying out the work of Christ. That we are few matters not if God is on our side. Read the parable of the mustard seed and the leaven (Matt. xiii. 31-33). It is for us to follow the ideal, if not the form, of discipleship. The ideal is simplicity of life and self-denial, enriched by a generous, helpful love.

XIV. Jesus, the Power for Good. Read Mark iii. 22-29. *Memory verse,* Mark iii. 23.

Purpose of Lesson. To show that evil is overcome of good.

1. *The Pharisees said Jesus was evil,* because he could overcome the evil spirits. But the Pharisees themselves used to cast out evil spirits (Matt. xii. 27). Jesus said they were quite wrong in calling him evil. Satan would not be so foolish as to fight against himself. Jesus had conquered Satan (evil), and therefore could release men from his toils. He overcame evil with good. See the story of Mahomet. He went with a friend named Ali to call on a man who had wronged Ali. The man abused Ali most terribly, who for a long time bore it without reply ; at last he too began to abuse, and then Mahomet left them. Afterwards Mahomet told him that so long as he was silent he saw angels round about him, but when he began to abuse, the angels left him one by one.

2. *Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.* This simply means refusal to see good where good is, for where good is God's Holy Spirit is. The Pharisees who cried out " Beelzebub " against Jesus were blasphemous. So also were those soldiers who burnt the saintly Joan of Arc as a witch.

XV. Jesus and his relations. Read Mark iii. 20-21, 31-35. *Memory verse,* Mark iii. 35.

1. *" He is beside himself."* His mother and brethren actually thought him mad (beside himself). Only great sympathy can help a man's friends to see the meaning of his life, and what his work should be. Jesus' relatives did not sympathize, therefore " he is mad." This is one of the most pathetic incidents in Jesus' life. As he said, " No prophet is without honour save in his own country." It was so with Michael Angelo. His parents did not believe in his art : but he made a beautiful model of a lion in butter, since he could not get marble. The duke saw it, and realized its worth, and helped him become the supreme artist he was meant to be. So Jesus worked on the lowly material of fishermen, and made them into holy saints. So he works on every heart. See also the story of the ugly duckling, which was despised, but turned out to be a beautiful swan. Read also Mark vi. 1-4.

2. Because of his relations' blindness, Jesus took in a larger circle of relations. Cut off from his own family, he looked to God's family, to which we all belong as brothers and sisters of Jesus, if we do God's will.

XVI. Jesus and the Syro-Phœnician woman. Read Mark vii. 24-30. *Memory verse,* Matthew xxv. 40.

This incident shows that in the kingdom of God no difference is made because of position or of race. St. Paul—" There shall be no more Jew nor Greek."

1. Even Jesus, loving and tender though he was, had been brought up to despise everyone who was not a Jew. Hence, at first, he only wished to help Jews. But the woman's clever reply opened his heart to her. This is a rebuke to all those who say " charity begins at home " as an excuse for helping nobody.

2. Henceforth he goes about helping all he can no matter where they were born. Read story of Samaritan woman at the well (John iv. 1-14).

3. The Christian Gospel teaches that all men are children of one heavenly Father. We are all brothers and sisters. God is in every one, so that what we do to the least of these we do to God. This belief would do away with quarrels and wars, because rich and poor, small and great, British, French, German, Hindoo, Chinaman, negro, etc., all would be brothers and sisters. *E.g.*, story of white hunter in America who refused to give food to a starving and weary Indian, because, he said, "There is no good Indian except a dead one." Many years later the white man got lost, and, weary and hungry, lay down to die, when a figure appeared, who gave him food and drink. It was the Indian he had despised.

For the Children.

By the Rev. J. Worthington, B.A

Difficulties.

SOME people are always trying to avoid difficulties. They are always looking for the line of least resistance. They change from one occupation to another, move about from one place to another, always expecting that the next occupation and the next place will not present difficulties like the last. They are always disappointed, but they never seem to learn anything from their experience. They go on deluding themselves to the end.

The truth is, of course, that difficulties meet us wherever we are, and whatever our occupation may happen to be. We may shirk them, but if we are to do anything well, fill any place worthily, there is only one way—we must frankly face and overcome our difficulties. Difficulties exist to be overcome. And there are none so great as cannot be overcome. If you have pluck enough, and faith enough, you can move mountains, said Jesus.

David Livingstone, the South African missionary and explorer, when a boy, wanted to learn Latin. But he had to work in the factory from 6 o'clock in the morning until 8 o'clock at night. How then, you will ask, could he find time and opportunity to learn Latin? Surely the thing was impossible; but Livingstone, like Napoleon, did not know the meaning of the word impossible. He quickly found the time and the opportunity. From 8 o'clock until 10 o'clock he went to a night school. From 10 o'clock until 12 o'clock he read his books at home. And at odd moments during the day, and without neglecting his work, he managed with his Latin grammar propped up on the spinning jenny to master a sentence or two while piecing the threads. Livingstone was a boy who knew how to deal with difficulties. In a short time he was able to read Horace and Vergil.

I expect you have read of the deliverance of the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt. You will remember that when Moses was leading the Israelites towards the Red Sea they heard the Egyptians were coming to take them back into captivity. Here, surely, was a difficult situation. They had the Red Sea in front of them and the Egyptians behind. And what did they do? They did what many do when they are in a difficulty. They stood still and grumbled about the hardness of their lot. They asked Moses mockingly if there were no graves in Egypt that he should have brought them there to die? But Moses was not a man to stand still and waste time grumbling. He commanded them to GO FORWARD, into the sea if needs be, but FORWARD they must go. And when they went forward, behold the sea divided before them, they passed through on dry land, reached the opposite shore, and were saved.

Every sea divides before a man of determination. Every mountain can be uprooted and cast into the waters by a resolute will.

Sometimes difficulties exist only in our imagination. A little courage and we find our fears were groundless. I have read somewhere of a Scotch boy who was out on the mountains one misty day. Sometimes mist has the power of making

objects look very much larger, and the boy on that day saw a great being in front of him as large as a church. He felt very much afraid, and his knees began to tremble, but he ventured to move forward a few paces. As he approached he noticed that it became smaller until it appeared no larger than a house. Moving forward a few more steps he saw to his relief that the great being continued to shrink until it became no bigger than an elephant. Taking his courage in both hands he went forward quickly, and came right up to it, and then he saw that what had made him so much afraid was just "his ain brither Sandy."

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